bited less enthusiasm for the holy rites of the modern city than veneration for the *senatus populusque Romanus* of the old. They felt that they were the descendants and representatives of the great masters of the world who imparted to history its finest touches of heroism, and patriotism, and nobility; and they longed that Rome should for a second time assume the importance of the world's capital in appearance as well as in reality, and that ecclesiastical and pontifical edifices should now, in spite of the change produced by the cross upon society, be counterparts of the temples and palaces of the imperial epoch. Then, while the merits of pagan and Christian art were being weighed in the balances, a voice was heard from Germany for which the ears of society were nearly ripe. Doctrines were warmly preached and rapidly promulgated that eventually shook everywhere the stability of the ceremonies of ancient faith, encouraging freedom of thought and suggesting a more diffused species of government in the church. The hasty result of these doctrines, as felt by the northern countries of Europe, was only averted from the holy see by the most stringent measures on the part of the Pope, and the dissemination of the most daring decree ever passed by a religious council. Thought was now awake, society was destined for a deep and powerful change, progression was imperative, and a return to the old *régime* impossible; and while national institutions were losing the characteristics they had worn for a thousand years, art could no longer remain passive, but lingered in a form of transition till the discovery of certain classical grotesques in various parts of Italy fired the Italian mind with the novelty of their loveliness, which Raffaelle and Udine were waiting to apply to the foundation of another school.

All trammels were now boldly shaken off, and the artists of Italy with one accord set to work, earnestly and devotedly studying the remains of classical antiquity in which their locality abounded, and applying them in a modified form to the production of the many works which an almost unparalleled amount of patronage caused to be executed. The architect copied old arrangements and principles, combining at his own discretion order with order, adding, as he pleased, more or less of the new class of ornamentation and some relics of the departing gothic, of which, at a moment's notice, he was unable to divest his mind. The painter in the accessories of his picture introduced the same mixed forms, while the illuminist and the decorator, in the enrichments they were called upon to produce, imitated the arabesques found upon the walls of the baths of Adrian, treating those subjects according to their own fancies, and discarding those ornaments which they thought inappropriate or ill-timed. The end of the fifteenth century, and the whole of the sixteenth, continued the use of the same style, which modern nomenclature has been pleased to term the "Renaissance," not only in the seat of its birth but in the other countries of Europe. In the latter fields it was sown partly by the efforts of men of genius—for, whatever a great man achieves, inferior successors are sure to imitate. Every art now possessed some master mind at its head, and the ultimate acquaintance of all the arts with architecture I have already endeavoured to shew. Painting and sculpture now gloried in the names of Raffaelle, Leonardo da Vinci, Michaelangelo, John of Bologna, and a crowd of others, who have purchased immortality. The goldsmiths' art was represented by Benvenuto Cellini, of Florence. Francesco and Girolamo Veronese, with their pupil Julio Clovio, performed tasks impracticable to all others, in book illumination; Lorenzo Ghiberti made the "Gates of Paradise," worked in bronze; artists of the highest standing lent their names to the manufacture of Faenza-ware and Majolica; wood-carvings, engravings, and designs for decorative art, issued from the ateliers of Dürer, Cranach, and Holbein; Léonard Limousin and the Courtoys, under the auspices of Francis I., produced the most wonderful pictures in enamel; while ornamental painting was carried to a high degree of perfection by Mabeuges; and arabesque designs boasted of such men as Udine, Romano, Primaticcio, Aldegraver, and Beham.

Most of the German masters of this time exhibited in their works two separate and distinct manners, the first before, and the second after, a journey to Italy; and this travelling to and fro, which gradually became very frequent, was the means of establishing in Germany the style of the Renaissance in its best features, though it is occasionally found strangely combined with native wildness and traces of lingering Gothic taste. The immense resources of the French court gathered around it a concourse of men supremely competent to strengthen the dominion of a style already familiar from the connection between France and Italy. Rosso, Da Vinci, Limousin, and Cellini, all appeared in Paris at the summons of Francis I., and contributed to sweep away the dying embers of the previous style, which the chivalry of the soil had for a time prolonged. England was, perhaps, more prepared than any other country for an alteration in the character of her architecture. The profuse splendour of Henry VII., who devoted his accumulated riches to the erection of one of the most gorgeous monuments in the world, had called into this country Torregiano, and with him a number of Italian workmen, who could hardly be employed upon the chapel at Westminster without in some measure influencing the arts of the nation, though there must then have been many who were opposed to the intrusion of a foreign style, since pure perpendicular works are met with of a much lower date. But the case was considerably altered after the ascent to the throne of Henry VIII. That arrogant monarch, who had taken advantage of the tendency to Protestantism to aggrandise himself at the expense of churches stripped and monasteries destroyed, in finally establishing the Reformation, superseded the necessity for such works as had chiefly employed the Gothic style to execute. The abbey and the convent were destined to be lost to architecture; the silver thurible no longer swung on the steps of the altar; the rood itself became a superstition, and the towering monstrance, with its decorated buttresses and delicate spire, was now a thing of the past. With a very few exceptions, no new churches were built, but the funds, appropriated by royalty and lavished on favourites, were necessarily applied to secular uses. A secular style was therefore requisite—a style divested of all ecclesiastical meaning, and free from symbolism, but which afforded ample scope for the exercise of fancy, as an atonement for all that the Gothic had recently exhibited. Exactly such a style was found in the "Renaissance." The workmen, too, after the death of their patron, Henry VII., were retained in England to complete what they had commenced, and they were now employed by Cardinal Wolsey at Hampton Court, by many of the nobility in the enrichment of their country seats, and by Anne Boleyn, in the wonderful organ screen and stalls which her liberality presented to the chapel of King's College, Cambridge. Holbein, the painter, the sculptor, the architect, the carver, and the goldsmith to the British court, completed the transformation of art from a religious to a secular establishment.

How, then, may the style of the Renaissance be described?

Architecturally speaking, it is often a heterogeneous combination of the various orders of classical antiquity; but, in the purest examples which have descended to us, one feeling is seen to pervade an entire edifice,—a feeling based upon some form of the Grecian or Roman, and enriched with the substitution of various conventional heads and flowers for the honeysuckle and acanthus, to which the original architect so often confined himself. But the accessory decorations are by far the principal features of the style. Volutes, as if in extension of the Ionic capital, are applied in a thousand different ways; in some instances foliated, in others enriched upon the face by a series of indentations, assuming either the form of an ellipse or of the letter X. Sometimes they are curled and threaded, as if they were representations of leather straps, arranged in a most complicated manner; but the friezes and panels, ornamented with bas-reliefs, are the principal charm in architectural works of the sixteenth century. Here unbridled fancy roves through a succession of forms selected from both kingdoms, disposed with the most exquisite balance, a modification of the antique acanthus forming the basis, while from its husks and centres issue flowers of every conceivable form. In the interstices laughing cupidons luxuriate, dolphins disport themselves, or creatures of the mind's creation, "monsters, and hydras, and chimeras dire," leer through the foliage, and conceal themselves behind its branches. But the foliage itself is very peculiar, and has never been properly examined, though it figures so prominently in the stall-friezes of King's College Chapel, and assumes an unnumbered variety of positions in the works of Holbein and Aldegraver. The leaf, whether in painting, in sculpture, or in carving, is first shaped like a simple heart, afterwards regularly divided into three, and then serrated according to the tastes of the designer. It is a non-observance of this rule which has mainly rendered the imitative works of recent French artists in bronze, stone, and other materials, less successful than they should have been, and imparted to them a different character from that of genuine works of the sixteenth century. In decorative art the style has advantages over every other. It possesses none of the childish and unmeaning rococo of the time of Louis Quatorze, but is equally capable of being employed in every object of modern use, without destroying its character, or contorting it to a form for which it is not adapted. Many attempts have been made to render the Gothic style the vehicle for imparting beauty to our manufactures. But none have been attended with success, for that style is so limited to particular proportions and geometrical arrangements, that in many cases either its principles must be violated, or convenience sacrificed to its absolute demands. It is the freedom from specified limitations and restrictions, whether in form or in proportion, which makes the style of the Renaissance so suitable for modern employment in architecture and decorative art. It is a secular style, which the Gothic style is not, never has been, and never ought to be. In our constructions at the present day utility should be the first thing considered—elegance of outline and ornamentation of detail should not be overlooked, but they should always be subservient to this principle: it is important equally that the architect of a mansion and the fabricator of everything it contains should remember—

"'Tis use alone that sanctifies expense,
And splendour borrows all her rays from sense."

I may also say, in conclusion, that the style of the Renaissance, in its modern adoption, can never be employed as a servile copy of its Italian precursor of the sixteenth century, for it is a favourite requirement of modern taste that every *ornament* should bear some allusion to the purpose of the building or object upon which it is placed; the gryphons, and tritons, and dolphins, and nameless monsters, therefore, however they may be tolerated as the accessories of buildings which have become venerable from antiquity, or from the association of some immortal name, it would hardly be desirable to repeat in the nineteenth century, when the fields or gardens of nature offer so wide a range for the study of the designer; and the Italian foliage to be used is so diversified in its arrangement, that monotony may be easily avoided. Heraldic embellishments may always be retained, and appropriate devices occupy the position of the wild and insolent grotesque.

I have thus endeavoured as briefly as possible to convey some idea of the circumstances which ushered the style of Renaissance into existence, offered some reasons for the rapidity of its extension through Europe, and suggested that its applicability at the present day depends upon the fact that it is a secular rather than a religious style of art. The sanctity which is thrown around it is derived less from any characteristics of its own than from the giant names that have associated themselves with it. England may, perhaps, scarcely hope that a new Cellini should impart an unheard of value to *her* gold, a Clovio illustrate by magic the pages of *her* history, or a Udine enliven for *her* the walls of a northern vatican, but her artists may at least learn to venerate what they possess of a period so magnificent, and may strive, at least in one department, to re-animate beauties of art which have slept for 300 years.

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